

REMARKS

Claims 10 to 20 are pending. Claims 10, 12, and 17-20 have been canceled. Claims 11 and 13 are currently amended. Claims 21-26 have been added. Upon entry of these amendments, claims 11, 13-16, and 21-26 will be pending.

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claim Amendments

Applicants note that rejected claim 10 included at least five distinct elements: a flexible base layer, a first black layer, a second black layer, a first adhesive layer, and a second adhesive layer. In contrast, the pending rejection appears to consider a black adhesive layer to be both the black layer and the adhesive layer. Although Applicants believe claim 10 is patentable over the cited reference for at least this reason, upon reviewing the claims and the pending rejection, Applicants also believe that rephrasing the pending claims would clarify the structure of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheets of the present invention, and may improve the prosecution of the pending application.

New Claim 21

Previous independent claim 10 encompassed two embodiments further described in previous dependent claims 11 and 12. For clarity, one embodiment is now set forth in new claim 21. One exemplary embodiment of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheets of new claim 21 is illustrated in FIG. 2, reproduced below.

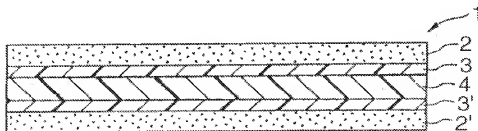


Fig. 2

Referring to page 4, lines 25-28, Fig. 2 shows a cross-section of one mode of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet of the invention. The double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet 1 has a first pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 2, a first black layer 3, a flexible base 4, a second black layer 3' and a second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 2'.

Support for claim 21 can be found in previously presented claim 10. Additional support for the clarified wording of new claim 21 can be found at, e.g., page 10, lines 20-22.

Claims 13-16

Claim 13 has been amended to depend from claim 21, rather than now-canceled claim 10. Claim 13 has also been amended to incorporate the limitations of now-canceled claim 17. As currently presented, claim 13 includes a reflective layer situated between the second black layer and the second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer. An exemplary embodiment of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheets of claim 13 is shown in FIG. 4, reproduced below.

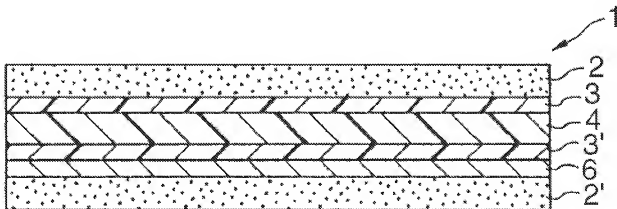


Fig. 4

The double-sided pressure-sensitive sheet of Fig. 4 is similar to that of FIG. 2, but further includes reflective layer 6, located between second black layer 3' and a second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 2'. (See page 5, lines 24-26.)

Because claims 14-16 depend from claim 13, their scope has been affected by the amendment to claim 13. However, Applicants believe the scope of current claims 13-16 corresponds to previously presented claims 17-20, which have been canceled.

Additional support for current claims 13-16 can be found at, e.g., Lamination Examples of Double-sided Pressure-sensitive Adhesive Sheets Nos. 3-5, 8, 9, and 11 at pages 10-11.

New Claim 22

As discussed above, previous independent claim 10 encompassed two embodiments further described in previous dependent claims 11 and 12. The second embodiment is now set forth in new claim 22. One exemplary embodiment of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheets of new claim 22 is illustrated in FIG. 3, reproduced below.

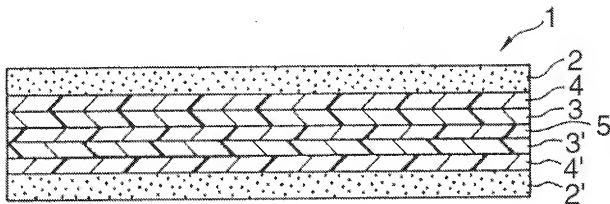


Fig. 3

Referring to page 5, lines 13-20, Fig. 3 shows a cross-section of another mode of the double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet of the invention. This structure comprises a first pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 2, a first flexible base layer 4, a first black layer 3, a lamination layer 5, a second black layer 3', a second flexible base layer 4' and a second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer 2'.

Support for new claim 22 can be found in previously presented claims 10 and 12. Additional support for the clarified wording of new claim 22 can be found at, e.g., page 10, lines 23-26.

New Claims 23-25

New claim 23 depends from claim 22, and includes a reflective layer situated between the second black layer and the second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer. Support for new claim 23 can be found in previously presented claims 10 and 13-20, as new claim 23 was an embodiment encompassed within the scope of previously presented claim 10. Additional support for new claims 23-25 can be found at, e.g., Lamination Examples of Double-sided Pressure-sensitive Adhesive Sheets Nos. 6, 7, and 10 at pages 10-11.

Claim 10, 12, and 17-20

Please cancel claims 10, 12, and 17-20.

102 Rejections

Claims 10-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by JP2002-23663 (JP '663).

Applicants respectfully submit that the clarifying amendments described above have not altered the scope of the currently pending claims relative to the scope of previously-presented claims 10-20. Therefore, the following arguments address the pending rejection as it relates to the patentability of claims 11, 13-16, and 21-26.

JP '663 provides an adhesive sheet consisting of, in order, a first separator (1), a first adhesive layer (2), a first vapor-deposited metal layer, plastic film (3), a second vapor-deposited metal layer, a second adhesive layer (4), and a second separator (5). (See FIG. 1, the Legend at page 7, and the descriptions at, e.g., paragraphs [0005] and [0007].) According to JP '663, the adhesive or the protective layer may include white or black pigments. (See paragraph [0011].)

Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed double-sided pressure-sensitive adhesive sheets are patentably distinct from the structures described by JP '663, for at least the following reasons.

First, independent claims 20 and 21 require that the first and second pressure-sensitive adhesive layers be the “outermost layers on either side of the double-sided pressure-sensitive sheet.” Thus, for purposes of comparing the structure of JP '663 to the present claims, the protective layers should not be considered, as they would be the outermost layers.

Second, at best, JP '663 may describe a black or gray adhesive layer; however, this is patentably distinct from two separate layers – a black layer and an adhesive layer – as required by previously presented claim 10, as well as current independent claims 21 and 22. Applicants respectfully submit that the Patent Office has failed to show how JP '663 describes a separate black layer interposed between a flexible base layer and an adhesive layer.

Finally, even if one were to consider the protective layers of JP '633 as potential black layers separate from the adhesive layers, these layers are not located between the flexible layer and the adhesive layer as required by claims 21 and 22.

In summary, independent claims 21 and 22 are patentable over JP2002-23663.

Claims 13-16 and 23-26

Claims 13-16 and 23-26 depend from claims 21 and 22, respectively. Claims 21 and 22 are patentable for at least the reasons stated above; thus, claims 13-16 and 23-26 are likewise patentable.

In addition, claims 13-16 and 23-26 require a reflective layer situated between the second black layer and the second pressure-sensitive adhesive layer. While JP '663 may describe a vapor-deposited metal layer, the Patent Office has failed to show how JP '663 describes positioning this layer between a black layer and an adhesive layer, as required by previously presented claims 17-20, and current claims 13-16 and 23-26.

JP '663 also describes including a white pigment in the adhesive layer or protective layer. (See paragraph [0011].) However, once again, the Patent Office has failed to show how JP '663 describes positioning this layer between a black layer and an adhesive layer, as required by previously presented claims 17-20, and current claims 13-16 and 23-26.

For at least these reasons, claims 13-16 and 23-26 are patentable over JP2002-23663.

Comment regarding reflective layers

Applicants discussed the deficiencies of using two reflective layers, including the structure of JP '663 at page 1, line 32 – page 2, line 17. In addition, Comparative Example 4 provides a double-sided pressure-sensitive sheet formed with a vacuum vapor deposited aluminum on both sides of a PET film. (Page 14, lines 10-17.) This structure did not perform as well as Example 1 of

the present disclosure. (See pages 14-15 for a description of the test methods, and Table 1 on page 16 for the results.)

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Allowance of claims 11, 13-16, and 21-26, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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